

**Indiana Bike Trails Task Force**  
September 26, 2018  
Meeting Notes

***Attendee List***

*Jeff Smallwood*  
*Kyle Hannon*  
*Kara Kish*  
*Pete Fritz*  
*Justin Schneider*  
*Bruce Kimball*  
*Paul Grayson*  
*Noelle Szydlyk*  
*Amy Marisavljevic*  
*Rebecca Holwerda*  
*Vince Griffin*

***Participating via phone***

*Dean Peterson*  
*Wes Culver*  
*Andrew Forrester*  
*Jay Mitchell*

***Meeting time: 10:08 AM***

**HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS**

Kyle Hannon thanked the Indianapolis Zoo for hosting us at the White River Gardens. He expressed appreciation for allowing us to meet at their facility.

**NEXT LEVEL CONNECTIONS, Rebecca Holwerda**

Rebecca reviewed the Governor's program to infuse \$90 Million into regional and local trails across the state. There was a stakeholder's meeting September 25, to gather a group to outline the trails plan and identify the priorities while determining the best way to distribute the dollars. They were also gathered to find consensus of how to move forward.

A basic timeline was established:

- To spend the next month identifying the parameters on how to distribute the funding.
- By the first of the year, start to collect applications
- By spring, start distribution of the funding.

Holwerda shared that while \$90 million seems like a large amount of funding, with the number of projects out there, it will go fast. Discussion of the stakeholders included working with partners to determine how the funding will be leveraged. She shared that it is exciting to see how over the next couple of months, the funding could grow the statewide trails program. Rebecca also shared that the Bike Trails Task Force was represented among the stakeholders. Kyle Hannon, Amy Marisavljevic and Mitch Barloga attended the meeting.

Kyle Hannon opened the floor up for questions.

Vince Griffiin asked if this fund has to pass through the legislature. Rebecca answered that no it does not.

Kyle Hannon interjected that we aren't at a place to discuss the funding plan due to how young the program is. The committee will continue to provide insight and direction.

### **SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Kyle Hannon capped conversation on safety and transitioned to the Fundraising Committee

#### ***FUNDRAISING SUB-COMMITTEE, Amy Marisavljevic***

Amy Marisavljevic gave an update as to the funding recommendations. She applauded the Governor's office for their commitment to the trails programs in Indiana. She also assured the group as to Kyle Hannon and Mitch Barloga's positive representation of the task force at the stakeholders meeting at the Governor's mansion.

Marisavljevic brought a map to show what was done with the initial \$19 million provided during Governor Daniels administration from 2006 to 2017. The map showed the immediate impact of the funding to grow the trail footprint in Indiana. A good chunk of the longer distance trails were all completed with the funding provided during this time. She shared that with the infusion of a larger amount of funding it could lead to an even greater impact.

Amy also showed the "gap map" to illustrate where the gaps are in the current trail system to show what can be done with the new funding opportunity to fill those gaps. DNR is tracking approximately 500 miles of trails that people are currently planning or working on, but also shared that \$90 million won't build them all. However once trails are built, this excites people across the state to create trails in their communities. There will still be a demand for new trails, for development and for maintenance even after the Next Level Connections funding is distributed.

Funding Source ideas were reviewed. The focus of a new funding source would possibly be for maintenance and upkeep as well as growth of a fund to make sure there is support to maintain and/or improve the trail system once the \$90 million in new funds has been spent.

Results of the committee findings as well as the review of the full task force discussion have been reevaluated to create the current list. There are a few items that were removed after the last meeting.

#### ***INNOVATIVE FUNDING IDEAS – Final Recommendations***

1. Tipping Fee – Fee per ton of waste dumped in Indiana. Currently \$.60 per ton. Currently being collected by IDEM. Idea to reallocate the underutilized fund from waste management fees for trails and recycling. Also suggested an increase to \$1. This would remain lower but put us more in line with other states.
2. Public Private Partnership – Develop a better way to incentivize private and corporate donations for trail projects. Big ticket trail projects like the Cardinal Greenway and Indianapolis Cultural

Trail have been funded in large part by this type of source. Committee discussed identifying better ways for organizations to sell their trail to corporations and to their local governments/residents.

3. Waste Tire Fee– Vince provided the details on this funding source idea. Reallocation of an existing fee – utilize excess funds from waste tire fees for trails instead of the initial allocation. Currently it is \$.25 per tire – would most likely require a legislative action. Could be dedicated entirely to maintenance and upkeep of existing trails. Current group overseeing the fund is IDEM. Plan would be to leave the current amount or a capped amount in the fund for IDEM use and the excess. Currently about \$1.5 million is collected annually in this fund.
4. Sporting Good Tax – Not a new sales tax - Dedicate a percentage of the existing sales tax on specific recreation products to fund trails. This is currently being done in other states. Amy's estimation is that approximately \$2.34 million in only sales tax on bikes could be put into a fund to assist in trail creation or maintenance. Including other types of equipment would increase the amount of the fund.
5. State Gas Tax – reallocation – RTP model – use an amount of state gas tax coming from ORV's and Snowmobiles – this is a smaller pot of money, would support both motorized and non-motorized or discretionary trails. Split the fund by applying a percentage to various types of trails. In addition to ORV's and snowmobiles, a general reallocation can also be done. This was done in other states through a small percentage. The tax could create a large portion of funds for trail development and trail maintenance.
6. General Appropriations – General appropriation of funds from the legislature to support a bike trail fund. Example is the \$90 million fund for trails recently announced by the governor.
7. Real Estate Transfer Tax – New tax on real estate transfers that would go to quality of life amenities such as trails and parks. Improve the quality of life so they improve real estate sales and industry. This is also being done in other states. This would be a new tax.

#### **FUNDING STRATEGY IDEAS – Final Recommendations**

1. Better utilize existing rail banking laws for a cost savings on land acquisitions. Indiana does not participate in rail banking as a state. Once the corridor is broken up it is much more time consuming and expensive to put the rail corridor back together. Potentially allow the state to have first right of refusal (either by taking ownership or by assisting a local community in purchasing the corridor). By keeping it rail banked the structures will stay that also saves money in the long run (bridges).
2. Use bonds to leverage money now
3. Partner with like-minded agencies to pursue larger funds – partner with other agencies or larger advocacy groups to expand the base of people affected. Creates a bigger range of needs if more groups are involved. For example working with the health department, IDEM, DNR, etc. to make the ideas easier for the public to get behind.
4. Re-direct existing funds on certain projects for larger impact
5. Get creative with grant match requirements- One suggestion is allowing matching funds to have a private fund component (like regional cities program) – communities using match funds as maintenance funding so the trail might be maintained for a longer period of time.

Kyle Hannon provided a reminder that this is simply a recap for what can be done at the state level

regarding for funding. Local organizations and communities do not have to follow this plan. It doesn't encroach on what local organizations can do to leverage funding in their area. The state does not have oversight to tell the local community how to find funding. Hopefully they can use this list to identify new ideas.

## **Discussion**

Jeff Smallwood kicked off the discussion by expressing concern that the taxes that are being proposed might be too much for the legislature. He suggested keeping the red flags to a minimum. Jeff also felt that it appears that many of the tax changes have a small impact on the overall funding. Jeff felt that we might just stick to two that have the best opportunity to be successful.

Paul Grayson shared a response as to the palatability of some of the funding recommendations with the legislature. Grayson reminded the group that the charge of the task force was to identify six creative funding methods, but that we should not eliminate any options we as a group feel are viable simply due to perceptions of how legislators may react to new ideas of funding or balancing other demands within the state budget.

Amy Marisavljevic shared that the sub-committee put these in the order of what the group felt was more palatable by the public and legislature. She also shared that many of the taxes are simply using taxes that already exist and not creating new ones. Jeff Smallwood suggested trying to find ways to get more bang for our buck.

Vince Griffin also provided additional detail as to how we came up with the list. He feels that we have a few great ideas that will look good to the legislature.

Kyle Hannon responded by explaining the two that fell off the list. The cigarette tax and the idea of using potential sports gambling fees down the road if that is legalized in Indiana fell off the list after discussion. Cigarette Tax because it is a dwindling amount year over year and the legalized sports betting because it is so new and hasn't seen much traction yet to be passed. There will also be a lot of people in line to get a piece of the pie if that money becomes available. Paul shared that we are setting this up for success.

Paul Grayson added that the Next Level Connections program is a tremendous infusion to the statewide trail system and a great jumping off point. The ideas and suggestions made by the Trails Task Force can supplement the Next Level Connections program to sustain growth of the overall trails program long term or create a funding source for trail maintenance.

Amy M. shared that the list reflects which sources were thought to be the least open to resistance or opposition. Those that rose to the top have a stronger opportunity to be considered.

Kyle Hannon asked that the final Trails Task Force report in the area of the "General Appropriation" include the detail related to the Next Level Connections program to show that this has already occurred.

Vince Griffin asked if there were comments related to the allocation of funding from the Governor. Rebecca Holwerda responded to the majority have been positive and people are excited. They are looking for this to be immediate action and not drag out for years and years. The physical building of trails will make things more real and get people excited.

Mitch Barloga suggested that in writing the materials for the final report (specifically the innovative funding strategies) that we designate the funding sources into specific expense areas. He also suggested that any kind of guidance that can be included is helpful.

Amy Marisavljevic and Kyle Hannon feel that we can provide guidance without dictating where it will be spent. Identifying eligible expenses that can be used for specific line items is important. Kara Kish asked if we need to provide recommendations for mechanisms for the distribution of funds as well. Amy shared that the recommendations are the general content for the final report. However the final framing and language is still being considered and the task force has time for further discussion.

Dean Peterson asked via the phone for the conference phone to be placed closer to the speaker so those on the phone could hear more clearly. Specifically when voting on the recommendations. Kyle Hannon reviewed the list of funding recommendations and funding strategies one more time.

Hannon moved to officially approve the recommendations from the Funding Sub-committee. Noelle Szydlyk checked the attendance list to confirm the task force had met quorum.

Vince Griffin provided a motion to approve the recommendations of the funding sub-committee. Bruce Kimball seconded the motion. Motion has been approved by a vote of the task force. Four members on the phone also voted.

#### ***TRAILS CORRIDOR SUB-COMMITTEE, Mitch Barloga***

Mitch Barloga pulled from the sub-committee meeting recommendations and notes on the discussion from the meeting in August. Page three and page four of the minutes from the sub-committee meeting can be used to gain more detail.

Barloga reviewed detail from previous task force and sub-committee meetings. He shared that based on previous discussion development of a tertiary or another level of trails to be worked into breakdown beyond the priority and secondary trails that have already been identified by DNR. These would be potential trails or arbitrary ideas (loose ends connecting existing or priority trails).

Barloga further explained the map showing large blank areas that currently don't have primary or secondary trail systems in place. Specifically southwest Indiana. He reviewed the idea of allowing DNR to select the potential trail systems that are not currently in place or haven't been pursued. This would give DNR the charge and the resources necessary to identify the routes and work with stakeholders to determine the level of public support.

Three types of corridors have been identified or outlined by the original visionary trails plan provided by DNR. The map was included in the August sub-committee meeting notes.

Paul Grayson suggested asking for funds to look bigger to project. The moonshot type of project that creates that “trail system” environment.

### **Trails Corridor Discussion**

Mitch reviewed the three tiered scheme. Jeff Smallwood asked if this tier system is all new. Barloga confirmed that one and two are the same, but the wording has been changed. The proposed trail criteria was added. Mitch feels this might be an agenda item for the next meeting. Barloga responded that they are simply establishing criteria. Smallwood also asked about the branding idea and if we are moving forward with discussing that further.

Paul Grayson commented on the idea to franchise trail sections and creating a brand for the trail system. He feels this is still an important piece of the overall plan going forward. This branding could include meeting standards to receive funding. Standards could include specific types of material being used, specific signage plan put in place, maintenance and clearly defining expectations for the trail long term.

Pete Fritz commented that there needs to be community engagement. While people need direction, they also need consensus and can create advocates in communities that may not have them. He felt that the group needs to confirm that there is interest. This will take time and effort to complete. Mitch Barloga agreed, but reminded the group they are working on identifying the corridors and what might be available or the best viable option for a trail location.

Paul Grayson addressed one of our other charges. “Presenting actionable concepts and a timeline as to how this could be phased and the cost for each phase”. Part of the realization is that we can only do this in broad brushstrokes. We need a timeline outlining the phases of how this trail system could come together with funding, costs, and timing and action steps. Paul reminded the group of the upfront investment of design and dialog in getting through this process. This could cost as much as \$1 million to do the research to define the corridors.

Noelle Szydyk asked if any of the ideas we are suggesting are being considered by those working on the Next Level Program. She also asked if shorter trails that may not be connected will still be part of the program or will it be a requirement for people to create connected trails. Mitch responded that there will likely be two areas but all encouraging trail development. There will likely still be small, unconnected trails that are part of the overall program.

Kyle is looking at what the governor has placed in the criteria for the Next Level Connections program and shared that they are similar to what the Trails Task Force has outlined. Amy M. mentioned that there are still details to come, but having representation in the stakeholders meetings has allowed what the task force is doing to be communicated and complement what is being decided by the stakeholders group.

Paul feels this new money needs to maximize its potential. It needs to knock it out of the park. But it also needs plant the seed and provide the direction to those that are engaged in developing trails in

their communities. Look to the success of the Next Level Connections program to guide their decision to spend funds and do development in the future. Has more long term opportunity than one might think. The new funding is inspirational because it is giving people opportunity to look with positivity toward the possibility for new trail programs in their community.

Kara Kish asked how we will come up with the cost allocation for the final report. Paul Grayson responded that we would use an estimate per mile to calculate the approximate cost based on the distance and the type of trail. Amy Marisavljevic shared that DNR has estimates in place for the type of the trail (crushed stone vs. paved surface), and any additional items that add to that expense (bridges, signage, etc.). We can use these estimates along with national estimates from groups like Rails to Trails Conservancy to determine the range of expense for the final report.

Kyle Hannon outlined the Trail Corridor Sub-committee next steps.

- Refine the criteria and tie to the DNR Visionary Trails plan
- Cost Estimates
- Create a timeline
- Brand Development

Kyle Hannon suggested that another sub-committee be developed to identify the cost estimates and timeline as well as work on the brand development. Marisavljevic also suggested we start to work on the outline for the final report, order of presentation, and figure out what it will look like.

Jeff Smallwood asked if we were going to have the INDOT consultants come to a future meeting. They were not available to attend the September meeting, but will be invited to provide a report at the meeting in December. Jay Mitchell shared that they are currently working on a survey that was provided to all the committee members as well as communities and organizations around the state. Noelle Szydlyk stated that they received a good response so far and that it was still open. This survey was focusing on needs of the state from the bicycle and pedestrian perspective.

Barloga asked about the date for the next sub-committee meeting. Possible date opportunity for the next meeting of October 16. He also requested it be at 11:00 AM ET. Paul asked to make sure the INDOT consultants are invited. Noelle will follow up.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Meeting minutes from August are in need of approval.

Motion to approve the June meeting minutes- Mitch Barloga

Second by Vince Griffin

Update to Jeff Smallwood's name on page 7. Listed as Brad in the current version. Noelle will address and make this change.

Minutes have been approved.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Hannon reviewed the next three meeting dates. The next Bike Trails Task Force meeting is Wednesday, December 12 – 10:00 am at Indiana State Library. All task force members are encouraged to attend the Trails Corridor Sub-committee meeting in October.

Szydlyk asked if there was a concern for the timing of the meeting on March 6. Noelle shared that there is a conflicting presentation involving some members of the Bike Trails Task Force that would not allow those members to attend at the previously scheduled time. There was no opposition for the 2:00 pm start time. All other meetings will remain at 10:00 am in December and June at the Indiana State Library.

Rebecca Holwerda motioned to adjourn. Vince Griffin seconded the motion. Motion passes.

Meeting adjourned